

## IMPROVED DECORATIVE CLASP SYSTEM

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## BACKGROUND

The present invention relates generally to ornaments that may be worn by people and animals and more specifically it relates to a decorative appliance that can be used for the wearing of lengths of decorative materials, where one or more of such lengths may also be worn  
10 as a separate ornamental item. Examples of such lengths of decorative material include chains, strands, ropes, cables, bracelets, necklaces, collars, anklets, links, strings and similar lengths constructed completely or in part of precious and semi precious metals, minerals, jewels and gems, cloth, fabrics, leather, beads, crystals, glass, wood, cork, bone, plastics, ceramics, stone, resins, rubbers, and other natural and synthetic ornamental materials.

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There are decorative clasps known in the art that allow for the simultaneous wearing of multiple lengths of decorative material. A number of these clasps have means to connect to the decorative lengths where all of such means are of the same type. For example, all of the connectors on the clasp are rings, and all of the connectors on the decorative lengths are hooks.  
20 The decorative lengths used in conjunction with these types of clasps may not, however, usually be worn separately as independent ornaments because the connectors on the ends of each decorative length are adapted to be connected to the connectors on the clasp, but not to one another.

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U.S. Patent no. 4,527,316 discloses a fastener system with “male” and “female”

connectors that may be used for simultaneous wearing of multiple ornamental chains in a “tangle-free concentric pattern” where such chains may also be worn separately as ornaments.

The invention of such patent, however, lacks a number of features. First, the invention of such patent does not provide for an arrangement of connectors that will provide for other than

5 concentric patterns of attachment of the lengths. Second, it does not provide for multiple types

of connectors to be used simultaneously or for locating the connectors on any portion of the

fastener system except the “side” thereof. Third, the invention provides only for a “closed ring”

and “jump ring” connector system on the decorative lengths that connect to the fastener system.

Fourth, the invention does not provide for the wearing of one or more additional lengths of

10 decorative material that are permanently attached to the connector system. Fifth, the invention

does not provide for multiple means of attachment of the portions of the connector system to one

another. For example, the invention does not provide for connecting the two sides of the system

using a magnetic means. Finally, the invention does not provide for connectors of a type other

than of the “male” and “female” type used in conjunction with a “closed ring” and “jump ring”

15 connector system. In particular, the invention does not provide for use of magnetic means to

connect the ends of the decorative lengths to the connector system.

## SUMMARY

20 The present invention is directed to a decorative appliance that overcomes the shortcomings discussed above in the Background section. As described in greater detail below, the present invention, when used for its intended purpose, has many advantages over other decorative clasp systems known in the art, as well as novel features that result in a new decorative clasp system that is not anticipated, rendered obvious, suggested, or even implied by

25 any prior art decorative clasp systems, either alone or in any combination thereof.

Generally, the present invention is an appliance used to connect one or more lengths of decorative material together. In various embodiments of the present invention, as described in greater detail below, one or more decorative lengths may be removably attached to the appliance. In these embodiments, each of the removable decorative lengths may also be separately worn as an independent ornamental item. In other embodiments of the present invention, as described in greater detail below, one or more decorative lengths may also be permanently attached to the appliance as a part thereof. In either case, the appliance, as well as the decorative lengths to which it is attached, may be worn by a person or an animal.

An advantage of the appliance is that removable decorative lengths can be easily added to or removed from the appliance as a fashion factor. For example, decorative lengths used as a necklace can be mixed and matched for a unique look or color combination to coordinate with a specific outfit worn by the wearer. By adapting the appliance to the particular desired use, the wearer can simultaneously wear decorative lengths having almost any type of means used to connect the ends of each of the decorative lengths together. This ability to interchange decorative strands using the appliance allows the wearer to change the overall appearance of the ornament (which includes the appliance and all decorative lengths connected to it) without having to buy a separate ornament possessing each desired appearance.

Each length of decorative material, whether removably attached to the appliance or permanently attached as a part of the appliance, may be comprised of almost any material that is currently used for ornamental purposes or that may be developed for such use in the future. Examples of such lengths of decorative material include chains, strands, braids, lace, ropes, strings, cables, bracelets, necklaces, collars, anklets, links and similar lengths constructed

completely or in part of precious and semi precious metals, minerals, jewels and gems, cloth, fabrics, leather, beads, crystals, glass, wood, cork, bone, plastics, ceramics, stone, resins, rubbers, and other naturally occurring or synthetic materials. Each length of decorative material generally has two end portions, which are referred to herein generally as “ends” or an “end” and  
5 “other end.” In the case of removable decorative lengths, each of such ends has a connecting means so that the ends can be removably connected to one another, allowing the length to be separately worn as an independent ornament. In some embodiments of the present invention, as described in greater detail below, these connecting means are magnetic in nature. In other  
10 embodiments of the present invention, as described in greater detail below, any type of connecting means used in the art, whether currently known or developed in the future, may be utilized for this purpose. Examples of such connecting means include hook and eye clasps, chain clasps, springing (spring ring and closed ring) clasps, lobster claw clasps, torpedo clasps, barrel clasps, fishhook clasps, and other ornamental clasps and fasteners.

15 A first version of the present invention is generally comprised of an appliance used to removably connect one or more lengths of decorative material by using magnetic means. Where only one decorative length is connected to the appliance, the appliance provides additional ornamentation to the decorative length. In this first version, the ends of each decorative length may also be removably connected together using magnetic force, so that each removable  
20 decorative length may also be separately worn as an independent ornament. In this first version, the appliance is comprised of a joining member having one or more first connecting portions and one or more second connecting portions. The joining member may be of almost any size, shape or configuration reasonably adapted for its intended purpose, the joining member generally having an inner surface facing the wearer, an outer surface approximately opposite the inner  
25 surface, a first lateral surface, and a second lateral surface approximately opposite the first

lateral surface.

The joining member may be constructed as a single piece, or may be comprised of more than one part or piece. For example, the joining member may be comprised of a joining portion, 5 which generally rests adjacent to the body or other surface of the wearer, and a decorative portion, which is attached to the joining portion. In this case, the joining portion generally has an inner surface facing the wearer, a joining portion outer surface approximately opposite the inner surface, a first lateral surface (which is also the first lateral surface for the joining member), and a second lateral surface approximately opposite the first lateral surface (which is 10 also the second lateral surface for the joining member). In this case, the decorative portion generally has a decorative portion inner surface and an outer surface approximately opposite the decorative portion inner surface. The decorative portion inner surface is attached to the joining portion outer surface using joining portion attachment means, which are discussed in greater detail below. The surface of the decorative portion opposite the joining portion is thus generally 15 the outer surface of the joining member.

One or more first connecting portions are located on or within a surface of the joining member. In embodiments of the invention where the joining member is comprised of a joining portion and a decorative portion, each first connecting portion is generally located on or within a 20 surface of the joining portion of the joining member. Each first connecting portion has magnetic properties and is adapted to be removably connected to one end of a length of decorative material, such end being generally comprised of a material so that such end may be removably connected to the joining portion by magnetic force. One or more second connecting portions are also located on or within a surface of the joining portion. In embodiments of the invention 25 where the joining member is comprised of a joining portion and a decorative portion, each

second connecting portion is also generally located on or within a surface of the joining portion of the joining member. Each second connecting portion cooperates with one first connecting portion and is adapted to be removably connected to the other end of the removable length of decorative material that is removably connected to the cooperating first connecting portion,  
5 allowing the other end of the removable decorative length to also be removably connected to the joining member.

In a second embodiment of this first version of the invention, each first connecting portion is comprised of a first cavity having magnetic properties. Each first cavity is recessed  
10 into the joining portion and is adapted to be approximately of the same size and shape as the end of the removable length of decorative material to which it is removably connected. This allows all or a portion of the end to be slideably inserted into and removed from such first cavity. While the end is inserted into the first cavity, the end is removably connected to the joining portion by magnetic force. Similarly, each second connecting portion is comprised of a second  
15 cavity having magnetic properties, which is also recessed into the joining portion. Each second cavity cooperates with one first cavity and is adapted to be approximately of the same size and shape as the other end of the removable length of decorative material that is removably connected to the cooperating first cavity. Each second cavity operates in essentially the same manner as its cooperating first cavity, allowing the other end of such removable decorative  
20 length to also be removably attached to the joining portion by magnetic force. It is to be noted that each first cavity and each second cavity may be very slight in depth, so that only a very small portion of the end or other end of the decorative length is inserted into the joining portion, or of a depth great enough that the entire end or other end of the decorative length is completely inserted into the joining portion.

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In a third embodiment of this first version of the invention, the one or more first cavities are located on the first lateral surface of the joining portion and the one or more cooperating second cavities are located on the second lateral surface of the joining portion. In a fourth embodiment of this first version of the invention, the one or more first cavities are located on the inner surface of the joining portion and the one or more cooperating second cavities are located on the inner surface of the joining portion. In a fifth embodiment of this first version of the invention, the appliance is approximately in the shape of a square, as viewed from above the outer surface of the joining member. In a sixth embodiment of this first version of the invention, each first cavity and its cooperating second cavity is adapted to receive ends and other ends, respectively, of removable lengths of decorative material, wherein such ends and other ends are approximately square or rectangular in shape. In a seventh embodiment of this first version of the invention, each first cavity and its cooperating second cavity is adapted to receive the end and other end, respectively, of a removable length of decorative material, wherein such end and other end are approximately circular in shape.

In a second version of the present invention, the appliance is comprised of a first joining member and a second joining member. The first joining member may be of almost any shape or configuration desired by the wearer, generally having a first inner surface facing the wearer, a first outer surface approximately opposite the first inner surface, a first lateral fastening surface, and a first lateral exterior surface. Similarly, the second joining member may be of almost any shape or configuration desired by the wearer, generally having a second inner surface facing the wearer, a second outer surface approximately opposite the second inner surface, a second lateral fastening surface, and a second lateral exterior surface. The first joining member and the second joining member are removably connected together by joining member fastening means, which are discussed in more detail below. In one embodiment of this second version of the invention,

however, the fastening means is comprised of the first lateral fastening surface and the second lateral fastening surface, wherein both of such surfaces have magnetic properties and are adapted to be of a size and shape so that they are removably connected together by magnetic force when they are located immediately adjacent to one another.

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The first joining member and the second joining member may also each be constructed as a single piece, or each may be comprised of more than one part or piece. For example, in a manner similar to the joining member of the first version of this invention, the first joining member may be comprised of a first joining portion, which generally rests adjacent to the body or other surface of the wearer, and a first decorative portion, which is attached to the first joining portion by first joining portion attachment means, as described in greater detail below. Similarly, the second joining member may be comprised of a second joining portion, which generally rests adjacent to the body or other surface of the wearer, and a second decorative portion, which is attached to the second joining portion by second joining portion attachment means, as described in greater detail below.

In this second version of the present invention, two or more first connecting portions are located on or within a surface of the first joining member. Two or more second connecting portions, each of which cooperates with a first connecting portion, are located on or within a surface of the second joining portion. Each first connecting portion and its cooperating second connecting portion has magnetic properties and is adapted to be removably connected to the end and other end, respectively, of a removable length of decorative material in the same manner as in the first version of the invention discussed above, so that each such end and other end may be removably connected to the appliance by magnetic force. As in the first version of this invention, each removable length of decorative material may be separately worn as an



independent ornament.

In a second embodiment of this second version of the invention, each first connecting portion is comprised of a first cavity having magnetic properties and its cooperating second connecting portion is comprised of a second cavity having magnetic properties. Each first cavity is recessed into the first joining member and its cooperating second cavity is recessed into the second joining member. Each first cavity and its cooperating second cavity are adapted to be approximately of the same size and shape as the end and other end, respectively, of the removable length of decorative material to which they are removably connected in the same manner as in the first version of this invention. This allows the end and other end of each removable decorative length to be removably connected to the appliance by magnetic force.

In a third embodiment of this second version of the invention, the two or more first cavities are located on the first lateral exterior surface of the first joining member and each of the cooperating second cavities is located on the second lateral exterior surface of the second joining member. In a fourth embodiment of this second version of the invention, the two or more first cavities are located on the first inner surface of the first joining member and each of the cooperating second cavities is located on the second inner surface of the second joining member. In a fifth embodiment of this second version of the invention, the first outer surface of the first joining member and the second outer surface of the second joining member are in the shape of a square while removably connected together. In a sixth embodiment of this second version of the invention, each first cavity and its cooperating second cavity is adapted to receive the ends and other ends, respectively, of removable lengths of decorative material, wherein such ends and other ends are approximately square or rectangular in shape. In a seventh embodiment of this second version of the invention, each first cavity and its cooperating second cavity is adapted to

receive the end and other end, respectively, of a removable length of decorative material, wherein such end and other end are approximately circular in shape. In an eighth embodiment of this second version of the invention, the appliance further comprises one or more fixed lengths of decorative material, wherein one end of each fixed length of decorative material is  
5 attached to the first joining member and the other end of such fixed length of decorative material is attached to the second joining member. The ends and other ends of the fixed decorative lengths are attached to the first joining member and the second joining member, respectively, by attachment means that are discussed in more detail below.

10 In a third and fourth version of the present invention, the appliance is comprised of a first joining member and a second joining member. The first joining member may be of almost any shape or configuration desired by the wearer, having a first inner surface facing the wearer, a first outer surface approximately opposite the first inner surface, a first lateral fastening surface, and a first lateral exterior surface. Similarly, the second joining member may be of almost any  
15 shape or configuration desired by the wearer, having a second inner surface facing the wearer, a second outer surface approximately opposite the second inner surface, a second lateral fastening surface, and a second lateral exterior surface. The first joining member and the second joining member are removably connected together by magnetic fastening means, which are discussed in greater detail below.

20 In the third version of the invention, the magnetic fastening means is comprised of a portion of the first joining member having magnetic properties and a portion of the second joining member having magnetic properties. For example, all or a portion of the first outer surface and all or a portion of the first lateral fastening surface of the first joining member have  
25 magnetic properties. In addition, a portion of the second inner surface and all or a portion of the

second lateral fastening surface of the second joining member have magnetic properties. The first outer surface and the first lateral fastening surface of the first joining member are adapted to be of a shape and size so that the first outer surface and the first lateral fastening surface of the first joining member can be positioned immediately adjacent to the portion of the second inner surface and the portion of the second lateral fastening surface of the second joining member having magnetic properties, so that when such surfaces are placed immediately adjacent to one another the first joining member is removably attached by magnetic force to the second joining member.

In the fourth version of the invention, the magnetic fastening means is generally comprised of a fastening tab portion of the first joining member and a fastening cavity portion located in the second lateral fastening surface of the second joining member. Both the fastening tab portion and the fastening cavity portion have magnetic properties and are adapted to be of a shape and size so that the fastening tab portion can be slideably inserted into and removed from the fastening cavity portion. The first joining member and second joining member are removably held together by magnetic force while the fastening tab portion is inserted into the fastening cavity portion.

In the third and fourth versions of the invention, the first joining member and the second joining member may also each be constructed as a single piece, or each may be comprised of more than one part or piece. For example, in a manner similar to the joining member of the first and second versions of this invention, the first joining member may be comprised of a first joining portion, which generally rests adjacent to the body or other surface of the wearer, and a first decorative portion, which is attached to the first joining portion by first joining portion attachment means, as described in greater detail below. Similarly, the second joining member

may be comprised of a second joining portion, which generally rests adjacent to the body or other surface of the wearer, and a second decorative portion, which is attached to the second joining portion by second joining portion attachment means, as described in greater detail below.

5           In the third and fourth versions of the invention, one or more first connecting members are attached to the first joining member. Each first connecting member is adapted to be removably connected to one end of a removable length of decorative material so that such end may be removably connected to the first joining member. Similarly, one or more second connecting members are attached to the second joining member. Each of such second  
10 connecting members cooperates with one first connecting member and is adapted to be removably connected to the other end of the removable length of decorative material that is removably connected to such cooperating first connecting member so that such other end may be removably connected to the second joining member. The first connecting members and the second connecting members may be of any type of connecting means used in the art, whether  
15 currently known or developed in the future, as long as they are adapted to be connected to the ends and other ends, respectively, of the decorative length. Examples of such connecting means include hook and eye clasps, chain clasps, springing (spring ring and closed ring) clasps, lobster claw clasps, torpedo clasps, barrel clasps, fishhook clasps, magnetic clasps, and other ornamental clasps and fasteners. In other embodiments of the third and fourth versions of the  
20 invention, one or more first cavities are also located in the first joining member, and one or more second cavities are located in the second joining member. Each first cavity cooperates with one second cavity, and the first cavities and second cavities operate, in the same manner as the first cavities and second cavities described above under the first and second versions of the present invention.

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In yet other embodiments of the third and fourth versions of the invention, the appliance is also comprised of one or more fixed lengths of decorative material. In these embodiments, one end of each fixed decorative length is permanently attached to the first joining member and the other end of such fixed decorative length is permanently attached to the second joining  
5 member. The ends and other ends of the fixed decorative lengths are attached to the first joining member and the second joining member, respectively, by attachment means that are discussed in more detail below.

The above summary illustrates some of the advantages of the present invention over the  
10 prior art. For example, some embodiments of the present invention have an arrangement of connecting portions and connecting members that will provide for other than concentric patterns of attachment of multiple lengths of decorative material. The present invention may also be used to connect decorative lengths having any type of connecting means used in the art -- it is not limited to any particular type of connecting means. In addition, other embodiments of the  
15 present invention provide for the use of multiple types of connectors simultaneously, so that decorative lengths having different types of connecting means (e.g., magnetic and hook and eyes clasps) can be worn simultaneously. Further, the present invention is not limited to an arrangement of connectors on the "side" thereof. Instead, the connecting portions and connecting members may generally be located on other portions of the appliance. Further still,  
20 some embodiments of the present invention provide additional ornamentation to the decorative lengths. The present invention also provides for the wearing of one or more lengths of decorative material that are permanently attached to the connector system -- it is not limited to connecting removable decorative lengths alone. Finally, various embodiments of the present invention provide for multiple means of attachment of the first joining member and second  
25 joining member, while other embodiments provide for a magnetic means of such attachment.

There has thus been outlined, rather broadly, the more primary features of the present invention. There are additional features that are also included in the various embodiments of the invention that are described hereinafter and that form the subject matter of the claims appended  
5 hereto. In this respect, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited in its application to the details of construction and to the arrangements of the components set forth in the following description or illustrated in the following drawings. This invention may be embodied in the form illustrated in the accompanying drawings, but the drawings are illustrative only and changes may be made in the specific construction illustrated and described within the scope of  
10 the appended claims. The invention is capable of other embodiments and of being practiced and carried out in various ways. Also, it is to be understood that the phraseology and terminology employed herein are for the purpose of the description and should not be regarded as limiting.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

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The foregoing summary, as well as the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments of the present invention, will be better understood when read in conjunction with the appended drawings, in which:

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**FIG. 1A** is a plan view of an embodiment of the first version of the invention from above the outer surface thereof.

**FIG. 1B** is a sectional perspective view of the embodiment of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 1A**, with the sectional break taken along the line **1B-1B** in **FIG. 1A**.

**FIG. 2A** is a perspective view of another embodiment of the first version of the invention  
25 from below the inner surface thereof.

**FIG. 2B** is a plan view of the embodiment of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 2A** from below the inner surface thereof

**FIG. 2C** is a sectional perspective view of the embodiment of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 2A** taken along the line **2C-2C** in **FIG. 2A**.

5        **FIG. 3A** is a perspective view of the joining portion of another embodiment of the first version of the invention from above the joining portion upper surface.

**FIG. 3B** is a plan view of the embodiment of the first version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 3A** from below the inner surface thereof.

**FIG. 3C** is a sectional perspective view of the embodiment of the invention illustrated in  
10 **FIG. 2A**, with the sectional break taken along the line **3C-3C** in **FIG. 3A**.

**FIG. 4A** is a perspective view of an embodiment of a second version of the invention from above the outer surface thereof, having the first joining member and the second joining member removably connected together.

**FIG. 4B** is a plan view of the embodiment of a second version of the invention illustrated  
15 in **FIG. 4A** from above the outer surface thereof, having the first joining member and the second joining member removably connected together.

**FIG. 4C** is a sectional perspective view of the second joining portion of the embodiment of the second version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 4A** from above the second outer surface thereof and showing the second lateral fastening surface thereof taken along the line **4C-4C** in **FIG. 4A**.  
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**FIG. 5A** is a plan view of an embodiment of a third version of the invention from above the outer surface thereof, having the first joining member and the second joining member removably connected together.

**FIG. 5B** is a sectional perspective view of the embodiment of the third version of the  
25 invention illustrated in **FIG. 5A**, with the sectional break taken along the line **5B-5B** in **FIG.**

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**FIG. 6A** is a plan view of an embodiment of a fourth version of the invention from below the inner surface thereof showing the fastening tab, the fastening cavity, the lip on the fastening tab, and the slot portion, having the first joining member and the second joining member removably connected together.

**FIG. 6B** is a sectional perspective view of the embodiment of the fourth version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 6A**, with the sectional break taken along the line **6B-6B** in **FIG. 6A**, and also showing the end and other end of a removable decorative length slideably inserted into the first connecting portion and second connecting portion, respectively, and such view also showing the fastening tab removably inserted into the fastening cavity.

**FIG. 6C** is a plan view of the embodiment of the fourth version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 4A** from above the outer surface thereof, having and showing the fastening tab and the fastening cavity each being of a smaller size, and having the first joining member and the second joining member removably connected together.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Reference will now be made in detail to the preferred aspects, versions and embodiments of the present invention, examples of which are illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

While the invention will be described in conjunction with the preferred aspects, versions and embodiments, it is to be noted that the aspects, versions and embodiments are not intended to limit the invention to those aspects, versions and embodiments. On the contrary, the invention is intended to cover alternatives, modifications and equivalents, which may be included within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.



In accordance with the present invention, an appliance is provided that allows people and animals to wear one or more lengths of decorative materials, such as chains, strands, braids, lace, ropes, strings, cables, bracelets, necklaces, collars, anklets, links and similar items, where one or more of such decorative lengths may also be worn separately as an independent ornament or other piece of jewelry. An embodiment of a first version of the present invention is illustrated in **FIG. 1A**. A sectional perspective view of this first version of the invention, with the sectional break taken along the line **1B-1B** in **FIG. 1A**, is shown in **FIG. 1B**. This first version of the invention is generally comprised of a joining member **20**, which has one or more first connecting portions **51** having magnetic properties and one or more second connecting portions **61** having magnetic properties. Although the joining member **20** may be used to removably connect one or more lengths of decorative material **80** to the joining member **20**, the embodiment of the first version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 1A** and **FIG. 1B** has one first connecting portion **51** and one second connecting portion **61**. Generally, each decorative length **80** has two end portions. The end portions of decorative lengths are generally referred to herein as “ends” or an “end” and “other end.” In the embodiment of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 1A** and **FIG. 1B**, one end **91** of the decorative length **80** is removably connected to one first connecting portion **51** and other end **96** is removably connected to one second connecting portion **61**. The end **91** and the other end **96** of the decorative length **80** also have magnetic properties and are adapted to be removably connected together by magnetic force so that the decorative length **80** can be separately worn as an independent ornament. The magnetic properties of the end **91** and other end **96** may be produced by any means currently known (which are so well known that additional description is not required here) or hereafter developed in the art. Preferably, the magnetic properties of the end **91** and other end **96** of the decorative length **80** are produced by two magnets or by one magnet and one member comprised of material that may be attracted by a magnet.

In the embodiment of the first version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 1A** and **FIG. 1B**, the joining member **20** is generally comprised of two parts. This is the preferred type of construction of the joining member **20**. The first part is a decorative portion **30**, which generally has an outer surface **31** (which is also the outer surface of the joining member **20**), and a decorative portion inner surface **32**, which is approximately opposite the outer surface **31**. The second part is a joining portion **40**. In this embodiment of the first version, as shown in **FIG. 1A** and **FIG. 1B**, the joining portion **40** is generally in the shape of a square having an inner surface **41** facing the wearer of the appliance (which is also the inner surface of the joining member **20**), a joining portion outer surface **42**, a first lateral surface **43** (which is also the first lateral surface of the joining member **20**), and a second lateral surface **44** (which is also the second lateral surface of the joining member **20**). In other embodiments of the invention, the joining member **20** may be constructed from a single piece of material, so that it is comprised of a single piece rather than two parts.

The decorative portion **30** may be of almost any size, shape or configuration reasonably adapted to be worn by the wearer, as long as the decorative portion inner surface **32** is adapted to be of a size and shape to be placed immediately adjacent to and attached to the joining portion outer surface **42**. For example, the decorative portion may be in the shape of a circle, sphere, disc, rectangle, square, parallelogram, ring, orb, spiral, crescent, arc, coil, cone, curl, curve, knot, loop, rainbow, ring, wave, animate object, inanimate object, or almost any other decorative shape or combination of shapes depending upon the taste of the wearer. Preferably, the decorative portion inner surface **32** and the joining portion outer surface **42** are both flat surfaces. As illustrated in **FIG. 1A** and **1B**, the outer surface **31** of the decorative portion **30** may be comprised of a raised square section **31a** of a size less than the size of the square

bounded by the decorative portion inner surface **32**, the raised square **31a** being generally in the center of the square bounded by the decorative portion inner surface **32** and having surfaces that generally slope from the four edges of the raised square section **31a** to the four edges of the square section bounded by the decorative portion inner surface **32**. In another embodiment of this version of the invention, as illustrated in **FIG. 2A**, **FIG. 2B** (which is a plan view of the embodiment of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 2A** from below the inner surface thereof), and **FIG. 2C** (which is a sectional perspective view of the embodiment of the invention of **FIG. 2A**, with the sectional break taken along the lines **2C-2C** in **FIG. 2A**), the decorative portion **130** is in the shape of a heart.

The decorative portions **30**, **130** may be constructed of almost any material currently known or hereafter developed in the art that is used for ornamental purposes. For example, the decorative portions **30**, **130** may be constructed completely or in part of precious and semi-precious metals, minerals, jewels, and gems, cloth, fabric, leather, beads, crystals, glass, wood, cork, bone, plastics, ceramics, stone, resins, rubbers, and other naturally occurring or synthetic ornamental materials. The decorative portions **30**, **130** may be constructed using any means of construction currently known in the art (which are so well known that additional description is not required here) or that may be developed in the art in the future. The decorative portions **30**, **130** may also be hollow or homogeneous in their structure. The decorative portion inner surfaces **32**, **132** of the decorative portions **30**, **130**, respectively, are either permanently or removably attached to the joining portion outer surfaces **42**, **142**, respectively, of the joining portions **40**, **140**, respectively, using joining portion attachment means. Any means of attachment currently known (which are so well known that additional description is not required here) or hereafter developed in the art may be used as the joining portion attachment means. For example, permanent means of attachment may include glues, adhesives, pastes, cements,

epoxies, screws, clips, pins, rivets, bolts, nuts, tapes, stitching, dowels, fasteners, hinges, welding, brazing, and other means of permanent attachment used for ornamental purposes.

Examples of removable attachment means include hook and loop fasteners (such as that commonly sold under the trademark VELCRO), clips, latches, clasps, and other means of

5 removable attachment used for ornamental purposes. Where removable means of attachment are used to attach the decorative portions **30, 130** to the joining portions **40, 140**, respectively, the wearer can change the decorative portions **30, 130** from time to time to suit his or her personal tastes.

10 Each first connecting portion **51, 151, 152** and each second connecting portion **61, 161, 162** may be of almost any size, shape and configuration reasonably adapted to receive, and be removably attached by magnetic force to, the ends **91, 191, 192** and the other ends **96, 196, 197**, respectively, of lengths of decorative material **80, 180, 181**, respectively. In the embodiment of the first version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 1A** and **FIG. 1B**, the first connecting portion

15 **51** and the second connecting portion **52** are cavities recessed into the inner surface **41**, as well as the first lateral surface **43** and the second lateral surface **44**, respectively, of the joining portion **40**. The first cavity **51** (the first connecting portion **51**) and the second cavity **61** (the second connecting portion **61**), which both have magnetic properties, are generally in the shape illustrated in **FIG. 1A** and **FIG. 1B**. This shape allows for the end **91** and the other end **96** of a

20 length of decorative material **80**, each of such ends being circular in shape, to each be completely inserted into the first cavity **51** and the second cavity **61**, respectively. It is to be noted that the first cavity **51** and the second cavity **61** may be of any reasonable shape and depth and need not be deep enough for the entire end **91** and other end **96**, respectively, to be slideably inserted into the first cavity **51** and the second cavity **61**, respectively. For example, another

25 alternative cavity shape and depth is illustrated in **FIG. 3A, FIG. 3B** (which is a plan view of

the embodiment of the invention of **FIG. 3A**), and **FIG. 3C** (which is a sectional perspective view of the embodiment of the invention of **FIG. 3A**, with the sectional break taken along the lines **3C-3C** in **FIG. 3A**), where the first connecting portion **251** and the second connecting portion **261** are each a cavity that has approximately a V-shape, so that the end **291** and the other end **296** of decorative length **280**, both of which are generally square in shape, are slideably inserted approximately half way into the first cavity **251** of the connecting portion **251** and the second cavity **261** of the second connecting portion **261**, respectively. Examples of first connecting portions **151**, **152** and second connecting portions **161**, **162** that have a cavity of minimal depth or no cavity at all are illustrated in **FIG. 2A** through **FIG 2C**. In these embodiments of the first version of the invention, the first connecting portions **151**, **152** and second connecting portions **161**, **162** are comprised of magnets embedded in the first lateral surface **143** and the second lateral surface **144**, respectively, of the joining portion **140** with the surface of the magnets being flush with or slightly recessed within the first lateral surface **143** and the second lateral surface **144**, respectively. This allows for ends **191**, **192** and other ends **196**, **197**, which in this embodiment have a magnetic connecting surface on the distal portion thereof that generally faces in a direction opposite the surface of the end and other end, respectively, to which the decorative length is connected, to be removably connected to the joining portion **140**.

It is also to be noted that the first connecting portions and the second connecting portions may be located in any reasonable position on any surface or surfaces of the joining portion. For example, the first connecting portion **51** and the second connecting portion **61** in **FIG. 1A** and **FIG. 1B** may be located on the inner surface of the joining portion **40**, as well as on the first lateral surface **43** and second lateral surface **44**, respectively. This would allow the end **91** and other end **96** of the decorative length **80** to be inserted into the first connecting portion **51** and the second connecting portion **61**, respectively, by way of the inner surface **41** or the first lateral

surface **43** or second lateral surface **44**, respectively, of the joining portion **40**. Another example is illustrated in **FIG. 3A** through **FIG. 3C**, where the first connecting portion **251** and the second connecting portion **261** are placed approximately mid-way between the inner surface **241** and the joining portion outer surface **242** on the first lateral surface **243** and the second lateral surface **244**, respectively. It is also to be noted that different shapes and depths of first connecting portions and second connecting portions may be used with any joining member. For example, although the first connecting portions **151**, **152** and second connecting portions **161**, **162** of the embodiment of the first version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 2A** through **FIG. 2C** are both of the same type (i.e., magnet recessed into the joining portion **140**), the first connecting portions **151**, **152** and second connecting portions **161**, **162** could be of any type or combinations of types of connecting portions. Thus, in some embodiments of this first version of the invention, the first connecting portion **151** or second connecting portions **161** illustrated in **FIG. 2A** through **FIG. 2C** could be of the cavity type of connecting portion illustrated in **FIG. 1A** (and **FIG. 1B**) or **FIG. 3A** (and **FIG. 3B** and **FIG. 3C**).

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In this first version of the invention, the joining portion **40**, **140**, **240** may be of any size, shape or configuration reasonably adapted to enclose and/or hold the first connecting portions **51**, **151**, **152**, **251**, as the case may be, and the second connecting portions **61**, **161**, **162**, **261**, as the case may be, while providing adequate strength to endure normal use in the application for which the appliance is intended, but being as thin as reasonably possible to reduce the weight the wearer must bear. Preferably, the joining portion **40**, **140**, **240** is in the shape of a square or rectangle having a size and thickness great enough to enclose and/or provide the magnetic properties for the first connecting portions **51**, **151**, **152**, **251** and the second connecting portions **61**, **161**, **162**, **261**, as the case may be. The joining portion **40**, **140**, **240** may be constructed of rigid or semi-rigid material currently known or hereafter developed in the art. For example, the

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joining portion **40** may be constructed of wood, plastic-type, metallic, or other natural or synthetic materials. The joining portion **40, 140, 240** must, however, have magnetic properties for proper operation of the first connecting portions **51, 151, 152, 251**, as the case may be, and second connecting portions **61, 161, 162, 261**, as the case may be, that are a part thereof. The

5 joining portion **40, 140, 240** may be hollow or homogeneous in its structure. The joining portion **40, 140, 240** may also be constructed using any means of construction currently used in the art (which are so well known that additional description is not required here) or that may be developed in the art in the future. For example, the joining portion **40, 140, 240** may be constructed of a single piece of material that possesses magnetic properties. In such case, the

10 joining portion **40, 140, 240** may be cast as a single piece of material having magnetic properties with the first connecting portions **51, 151, 152, 251**, as the case may be, and the second connecting portions **61, 161, 162, 261**, as the case may be, included as a part of such casting. Alternatively, the first connecting portions **51, 151, 152, 251**, as the case may be, and the second connecting portions **61, 161, 162, 261**, as the case may be, may be created by machining the

15 joining portion **40, 140, 240**. This method is particularly suited to the embodiment of the first version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 2A** through **FIG. 2C**, where the cavities for the first connecting portions **151, 152** and the second connecting portions **161, 162** may be prepared by machining the appropriate portions of a joining portion **140** constructed of polyvinyl chloride. In this embodiment, a disc-shaped magnet is inserted into each cavity for the first connecting

20 portions **151, 152** and each cavity for the second connecting portions **161, 162**, the surface of each of the magnets being flush with or recessed slightly below the first lateral surface **143** and the second lateral surface **144**, as the case may be. As another example, the joining portion may be constructed in layers, as illustrated in **FIG. 3A** through **FIG. 3C**. In this case, the layer **246** having the joining portion outer surface **242** and the layer **247** having the inner surface **241** are

25 in the shape of a square. The third layer **248** is in the shape of a square with cut-out portions

representing the first connecting portion **251** and the second connecting portion **261**. The layers **246, 247, 248** may all be constructed of materials having magnetic properties, but need not be as long as at least one of the layers **246, 247, 248** is constructed of a material having magnetic properties. Further, in all embodiments of this first version of the invention, the portion of the joining portion **40, 140, 240** having magnetic properties must have a magnetic field strength and polarity sufficient to hold the ends **91, 191, 192, 291**, as the case may be, and other ends **96, 196, 197, 296**, as the case may be, to the first connecting portion **51, 151, 152, 251**, as the case may be, and the second connecting portion **61, 161, 162, 261**, as the case may be, of the joining portion **40, 140, 240** during anticipated use, but also allow for the removal of the end **91, 191, 192, 291**, as the case may be, and other end **96, 196, 197, 296**, as the case may be, from the joining portion **40, 140, 240** with a reasonable amount of force.

An embodiment of a second version of the invention is illustrated in **FIG. 4A, FIG. 4B** (which is a plan view of the embodiment of the second version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 4A** from above the outer surface thereof, having the first joining member **320** and the second joining member **325** removably connected together), and **FIG. 4C** (which is a sectional perspective view of the second joining portion **325** of the embodiment of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 4A** from above the second outer surface **327** thereof and showing the second lateral fastening surface **328** thereof). In this embodiment of the second version, the appliance **315** includes a first joining member **320**, which has a first inner surface **321** facing the wearer, a first outer surface **322** approximately opposite of the first inner surface **321**, a first lateral fastening surface **323**, and a first lateral exterior surface **324**. It also includes a second joining member **325**, which has a second inner surface **326** facing the wearer, a second outer surface **327** approximately opposite of the second inner surface **326**, a second lateral fastening surface **328**, and a second lateral exterior surface **329**. The first joining member **320** is removably connected



to the second joining member **325** by using the joining member fastening means described in greater detail below. In the embodiment of the second version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 4A** through **FIG. 4C**, the first joining member **320** is generally a mirror image of the second joining member **325** illustrated in **FIG. 4C**.

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As illustrated in **FIG. 4A** through **FIG. 4C**, in this embodiment of the second version, each first joining member **320** has two or more first connecting portions **351**, **352** having magnetic properties. Each second joining member **325** has two or more second connecting portions **361**, **362** having magnetic properties. When removably connected together, the first

10 joining member **320** and the second joining member **325** allow two or more lengths of decorative material **380**, **381** to be worn together simultaneously. Generally, each of the decorative lengths **380**, **381** has two ends, with ends **391**, **392** being removably connected to first connecting portions **351**, **352**, respectively, and the other ends **396** and **397** being removably connected to second connecting portions **361**, **362**, respectively. As illustrated in **FIG. 4A**

15 through **FIG. 4C**, this embodiment of the second version of the invention has two first connecting portions **351**, **352** and two second connecting portions **361**, **362**, but there may be fewer or more first connecting portions and second connecting portions to suit the taste of the wearer. The end **391** and the other end **396** of the decorative length **380** have magnetic properties and are adapted to be removably connected together by magnetic force so that the

20 decorative length **380** can be separately worn as an independent ornament. Similarly, the end **392** and the other end **397** of the decorative length **381** also have magnetic properties and are adapted to be removably connected together by magnetic force so that the decorative length **381** can be separately worn as an independent ornament. The magnetic properties of the ends **391**, **392** and other ends **396**, **397** may be produced by any means currently known (which are so well

25 known that additional description is not required here) or hereafter developed in the art.

Preferably, the magnetic properties of the ends **391, 392** and other ends **396, 397** are each produced by two magnets or one magnet and one member comprised of material that may be attracted by a magnet.

5           In the embodiment of the second version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 4A** through **FIG. 4C**, the first joining member **320** and the second joining member **325** generally have the same features as the joining members **20, 120, 220** of the first version of the invention, as illustrated and described above in conjunction with **FIG. 1A, FIG. 1B, FIG. 2A** through **FIG. 2C**, and **FIG. 3A** through **FIG. 3C**, as if the joining members **20, 120, 220** of the first version  
10   have each been approximately divided into two parts. Thus, the first joining member **320** may be constructed of a first decorative portion **330** and a first joining portion **340**, or as a single piece, in the same manner as the joining members **20, 120, 220** of the first version of the invention. Similarly, the second joining member **325** may be constructed of a first decorative portion **335** and a first joining portion **345**, or as a single piece, in the same manner as the  
15   joining members **20, 120, 220** of the first version of the invention. Further, the first decorative portion **330** and the second decorative portion **335** may be of almost any size, shape, structure or configuration in the same manner as the decorative portions **30, 130, 230** illustrated and described above in conjunction with the first version of the invention, provided that the first decorative portion **330** is adapted to be attached to the first joining portion **340**, the second  
20   decorative portion **335** is adapted to be attached to the second joining portion **345**, and the first decorative portion **330** and the second decorative portion **340** are adapted to be of a size, shape and configuration to allow the first joining portion **320** and the second joining portion **325** to be removably connected together. In addition, the first decorative portion **330** and the second decorative portion **335** may be constructed of the same materials and in the same manner as the  
25   decorative portions **30, 130, 230** illustrated and described above in conjunction with the first

version of the invention. The first joining portion attachment means used to attach the first decorative portion **330** to the first joining portion **340**, and second joining portion attachment means used to attach the second decorative portion **335** to the second decorative portion **345**, are the same as the joining attachment means used to attach the decorative portions **30**, **130**, **230** to the joining portions **40**, **140**, **240**, respectively, as illustrated and described above in conjunction with the first version of the invention.

In addition, in the embodiment of this second version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 4A** through **FIG. 4C**, each first connecting portion **351**, **352** and each second connecting portion **361**, **362** generally have the same features as first connecting portions **51**, **151**, **152**, **251** and second connecting portions **61**, **161**, **162**, **261**, as the case may be, as illustrated and described above in conjunction with the first version of the invention. Thus, each first connecting portion **351**, **352** and each second connecting portion **361**, **362** may have the same magnetic properties and may be of almost any size, shape, structure, position and configuration reasonably adapted to receive, and be removably attached by magnetic force to, ends **391**, **392** and other ends **396**, **397**, respectively, of the decorative lengths **380**, **381**, respectively, in the same manner that the first connecting portions **51**, **151**, **152**, **251** and second connecting portions **61**, **161**, **162**, **261** are adapted to receive and be removably attached to ends **91**, **191**, **192**, **291** and the other ends **96**, **196**, **197**, **296**, respectively, of lengths of decorative material **80**, **180**, **181**, **280**, respectively, all as illustrated and described above in conjunction with the first version of the invention.

Similarly, there may be any reasonable number of first connecting portions and cooperating second connecting portions, as determined by the taste of the wearer. In addition, the orientation of each of the first connecting portions **351**, **352** and second connecting portions **361**, **362** on the first joining portion **340** and the second joining portion **345**, respectively, may be in any combination. For example, first connecting portion **351** and second connecting portion **362**

could be V-shaped to receive ends **391**, **396**, respectively, that are square-shaped, while first connecting portion **352** and the second connecting portion **361** could be of the shape of first connecting portion **251** and second connecting portion **261**, respectively, illustrated in **FIG. 3A** through **FIG. 3C**, to receive ends **392**, **397**, respectively, that are circle-shaped. This  
5 configuration would also allow for overlapping decorative lengths **380** and **381**.

In the embodiment of the second version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 4A** through **FIG. 4C**, the first joining portion **340** and the second joining portion **345** generally have the same features as the joining portions **40**, **140**, **240** of the first version of the invention, as  
10 illustrated and described above in conjunction with **FIG. 1A**, **FIG. 1B**, **FIG. 2A** through **FIG. 2C**, and **FIG. 3A** through **FIG. 3C**, as if the joining portions **40**, **140**, **240** of the first version have each been approximately divided into two parts. Thus, the first joining portion **340** and the second joining portion **345** may have the same magnetic properties and may be of almost any size, shape, structure, position and configuration as the joining portions **40**, **140**, **240** illustrated  
15 and described above in conjunction with the first version of the invention, provided that the first lateral fastening surface **323** of the first joining member **320** is adapted to be removably attached to the second lateral fastening surface **328** of the second joining member **325** using the joining member fastening means described below. In addition, the first joining portion **340** and the second joining portion **345** may be constructed of the same materials and in the same manner as  
20 the joining portions **40**, **140**, **240** illustrated and described above in conjunction with the first version of the invention.

In this second version of the invention, the joining member fastening means used to removably connect the first joining member **320** to the second joining member **325** may be any  
25 fastening means currently known or hereafter discovered in the art. Such fastening means may

include any type of clasp-type or fastener-type of device. For example, the first joining member 320 may be removably connected to the second joining member 325 by using hook and eye clasps, chain clasps, springing (spring ring and closed ring) clasps, lobster claw clasps, torpedo clasps, barrel clasps, fishhook clasps, magnetic clasps, and other similar clasps and fasteners.

- 5 These types of clasps and fasteners may be used in conjunction with chains, straps, and other lengths of decorative materials that are used to connect the clasps or fasteners to the first joining member 320 and the second joining member 325. Although any surface of the first joining member 320 may be removably connected to any surface of the second joining member 325, the preferable means is to removably connect the first lateral fastening surface 323 of the first
- 10 joining member 320 to the second lateral fastening surface 328 of the second joining member 325 by using such fastening means, as illustrated in FIG. 4A through FIG. 4C.

- In the embodiment of the second version of the invention illustrated in FIG. 4A through FIG. 4C, a magnetic connecting means is used to removably connect the first joining member
- 15 320 to the second joining member 325. In this embodiment, a first magnetic strip 371 is attached to the first lateral fastening surface 323 of the first joining member 320 and a second magnetic strip 372 is attached to the second lateral fastening surface 328 of the second joining member 325. The first magnetic strip 371 and the second magnetic strip 372 are comprised of a material having magnetic properties, which have a magnetic field strength great enough to hold
- 20 the first joining member 320 to the second joining member 325 during the anticipated use of the invention, but that also allows for the separation of the first joining member 320 from the second joining member 325 with a reasonable amount of force when the wearer decides to remove the invention. In the embodiment of the second version of the invention illustrated in FIG. 4A through FIG. 4C, the first magnetic strip 371 is recessed into the first lateral fastening surface
- 25 323 of the first joining member 320 and the second magnetic strip 372 is recessed into the

second lateral fastening surface **328** of the second joining member **325**, but this need not be the case in all embodiments of the invention. In addition, the polarity of the first magnetic strip **371** and the second magnetic strip **372** is such that the strips attract one another, rather than repel one another, when they are intended to be removably connected together.

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An embodiment of a third version of the invention is illustrated in **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B** (which is a sectional perspective view of the embodiment of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 5A**, with the section break taken along the line **5B-5B** of **FIG. 5A**). In this embodiment of the third version, the appliance **415** includes a first joining member **420**, which generally has a first inner surface **421** facing the wearer, a first outer surface **422** approximately opposite of the first inner surface **421**, a first lateral fastening surface **423**, and a first lateral exterior surface **424**. The appliance **415** also includes a second joining member **425**, which generally has a second upper inner surface portion **426a** facing the wearer, a second lower inner surface portion **426b** facing the wearer, a second outer surface **427** approximately opposite of the second upper inner surface portion **426a** and the second lower inner surface portion **426b**, a second lateral fastening surface **428**, and a second lateral exterior surface **429**.

In this embodiment of the third version of the invention, as illustrated in **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B**, the first joining member **420** is removably connected to the second joining member **425** by using magnetic fastening means comprised of a portion of the first joining member **420** having magnetic properties and a portion of the second joining member **425** having magnetic properties. In the embodiment of the third version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B**, all or a portion of the first outer surface **422** and all or a portion of the first lateral fastening surface **423** of the first joining member **420** have magnetic properties. In addition, all or a portion of the second upper inner surface portion **426a** and all or a portion of the second

lateral fastening surface **428** of the second joining member **425** have magnetic properties. The first outer surface **422** and the first lateral fastening surface **423** of the first joining member **420** are adapted to be of a shape, size and configuration so that the first outer surface **423** and the first lateral fastening surface **425** of the first joining member **420** can be positioned immediately adjacent to all or a portion of the second upper inner surface portion **426a** and all or a portion of the second lateral fastening surface **428** of the second joining member **425**, respectively, so that when such surfaces are placed immediately adjacent to one another the first joining member **420** is removably attached by magnetic force to the second joining member **425**. Although all of such surfaces may be of any size, shape, or configuration desired by the wearer, all of such surfaces are preferably flat. The magnetic properties for such surfaces may be provided in any manner currently known (which are so well known that additional description is not required here) or hereafter developed in the art. Preferably, a thin strip of metallic or other material having magnetic properties may be attached to, or be slightly recessed into, each of such surfaces. The means of such attachment may be any of those currently known in the art (which are so well known that additional description is not required here) or developed in the art in the future. The preferred means of attachment is a glue or other adhesive. Alternatively, all or a portion of the first joining member **420** and the second joining member **425** may be constructed of a metallic or other material having magnetic properties. In all embodiments of this third version of the invention, the portions of the first joining member **420** having magnetic properties and the portions of the second joining member **425** having magnetic properties must together have a magnetic field strength and polarity sufficient to hold the first outer surface **422** and the first lateral fastening surface **423** of the first joining member **420** to the first upper inner surface portion **426a** and the second lateral fastening surface **428** of the second joining member **425** during anticipated use, but also allow for the removal of the first joining member **420** from the second joining member **425** with a reasonable amount of force when the wearer desires to

remove the invention.

As illustrated in **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B**, in this embodiment of the third version, the first joining member **420** has two or more first connecting members **451, 452**, which are of a size, shape, configuration and type adapted to be removably connected to one end **491, 492**, respectively, of a removable length of decorative material **480, 481**, respectively. The second joining member **425** also has two or more second connecting members **461, 462**. Although there may be more or fewer than two first connecting members and two second connecting members, the embodiment of the third version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B** has two first connecting members **451, 452** and two second connecting members **461, 462**. Each of such second connecting members **461, 462** cooperates with one first connecting member **451, 452**, respectively, such second connecting members **461, 462** being of a size, shape, configuration and type adapted to be removably connected to the other end **496, 497**, respectively, of the removable length of decorative material **480, 481**, respectively, that is removably connected to the cooperating first connecting members **451, 452**, respectively. For example, in this embodiment of the third version of the invention, first connecting member **451** is adapted to be removably connected to the end **491** of decorative length **480**, and second connecting member **461** cooperates with first connecting member **451**, so that second connecting member **461** is adapted to be removably connected to other end **496** of decorative length **480**. Thus, when removably connected together, the first joining member **420** and the second joining member **425** allow two or more lengths of decorative material **480, 481** to be worn together simultaneously. The end **491** and the other end **496** of the decorative length **480** are adapted to be removably connected together by conventional means so that the decorative length **480** can be separately worn as an independent ornament. Similarly, the end **492** and the other end **497** of the decorative length **481** are also adapted to be removably connected together by conventional



means so that the decorative length **481** can be separately worn as an independent ornament.

Such conventional connecting means includes all means currently known in the art (which are so well known that additional description is not required here) or developed in the art in the future that may be used to removably connect together the ends of ornaments and jewelry. Examples  
5 of such conventional means used for ornaments and jewelry include hook and eye clasps, chain clasps, springing (spring ring and closed ring) clasps, lobster claw clasps, torpedo clasps, barrel clasps, fishhook clasps, magnetic clasps, and other similar clasps and fasteners.

In addition, the first joining member **420** and the second joining member **425** may be of  
10 almost any size, shape, structure and configuration reasonably adapted for its intended purpose and may be constructed of almost any material suitable for their intended purpose of supporting the first connecting members **451**, **452** and the second connecting members **461**, **462**, respectively, so that the decorative lengths **480**, **481** may be worn together. For example, all or part of the first joining member **420** and the second joining member **425** may be constructed of  
15 precious and semi precious metals, minerals, jewels and gems, cloth, fabrics, leather, beads, crystals, glass, wood, cork, bone, plastics, ceramics, stone, resins, rubbers, and other suitable naturally occurring or synthetic materials, provided that there are sufficient materials having magnetic properties to accomplish the fastening means described above and sufficient strength to accomplish their purpose of connecting the decorative lengths **480**, **481**, **482** together.

20 Similarly, the first joining member **420** and the second joining member **425** may be hollow or homogeneous in their structure. In addition, the first joining member **420** and the second joining member **425** may be constructed in one or more parts. For example, the second joining member **425** may have a decorative portion **430** and a joining portion **440**, which have features similar to, and may be attached together (the second joining portion attachment means) in a manner similar  
25 to, those of the decorative portions **330** and joining portions **340**, respectively, as illustrated and

described above in conjunction with the second version of this invention. The first joining member **420** and the second joining member **425** may be constructed in the same general manner as the first joining member **320** and the second joining member **325**, as illustrated and described above in the second version of this invention. The preferred materials and means of construction of the first joining member **420** and the second joining member **425** are dependent upon the individual tastes of the wearer. More preferred, at least the portions of the first joining member **420** and the second joining member **425** that are attached to the first connecting members **451**, **452** and the second connecting members **461**, **462**, respectively, are constructed of rigid or semi-rigid materials, such as a metallic material.

In the embodiment of the third version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B**, first connecting members **451**, **452** and second connecting members **461**, **462** are attached to the first lateral exterior surface **424** and second lateral exterior surface **429**, respectively. It is be noted, however, that one or more of the first connecting members **451**, **452** may be attached to the first inner surface **421** or the first outer surface **422** of the first joining member **420** in other embodiments of the invention. In still other embodiments of this third version of the invention, one or more of the second connecting members **461**, **462** may be attached to one or more of the second lower inner surface portion **426b**, the second outer surface **427**, or any other surface of the second joining member **425** in any desired combination. It is be noted, however, that it is not necessary that any second connecting member **461**, **462** be located on the same surface or opposite surface of its cooperating first connecting member **451**, **452** or any other second connecting member **461**, **462**. Preferably, the first connecting members **451**, **452** are connected to the first lateral exterior surface **424** and the second connecting members **461**, **462** are connected to the second lateral exterior surface **429**.

First connecting members **451, 452** may be constructed of almost any material suitable for their intended purpose of being a part of or attached to the first joining member **420** or second joining member **425**, as the case may be, at one end of such first connecting member **451, 452**, and to the ends **491, 492** of decorative lengths **480, 481**, respectively, at the distal end of such first connecting members **451, 452**. For example, all or part of the first connecting members **451, 452** may be constructed of metal (with or without magnetic properties), wood, plastic, glass, ceramic, and other suitable materials. Preferably, at least the portion of the first joining member **420** or second joining member **425**, as the case may be, that is in contact with the first connecting members **451, 452** is constructed of a metallic substance. More preferably, the connecting members **451, 452** are constructed of a metallic substance and coated with a precious or semi-precious metal alloy. Second connecting members **461, 462** may generally be constructed of the same materials suitable for construction of first connecting members **451, 452**, as described above. Preferably, each second connecting member **461, 462** is constructed of the same material or materials as its cooperating first connecting member **451, 452**, respectively.

The first connecting members **451, 452** may be connected to the first joining member **420** using almost any suitable means known (which are so well known that they do not require additional description here) or hereafter discovered in the art. For example, where the first joining member **420** and the first connecting members **451, 452** are constructed of a metallic substance, the first connecting members **451, 452** may be cast as a part of the first joining member **420** or may be soldered, welded, or bronzed to the first joining member **420**. Other examples of such connecting means include use of glues, adhesives, cements, epoxies, screws, clips, pins, rivets and other fastening means now known or hereafter developed in the art. Preferably, the first connecting members **451, 452** are cast as a part of the first joining member **420** or the second joining member **425**, as the case may be, or are soldered, welded, or bronzed

to the first joining member **420** or the second joining member **425**, as the case may be. Each of the second connecting members **461**, **462** may be attached to the second joining member **425** in the same manner as the first connecting members **451**, **452** may be attached to the first joining member **420**, as described above. Although it is not necessarily the case in all embodiments, 5 each second connecting member **461**, **462** is preferably attached to the second joining member **425** in the same manner as its cooperating first connecting member **461**, **462**, respectively.

Each of such first connecting members **451**, **452** is adapted to be removably connected to one end **491**, **492**, respectively, of a length of decorative material **480**, **481**, respectively, 10 allowing each of such ends **491**, **492** of the decorative lengths **480**, **481**, respectively, to be removably connected to the first joining member **420**. It is also to be noted that the first connecting members **451**, **452** may all have the same type of means to connect to the ends **491**, **492**, respectively, of the decorative lengths **480**, **481**, respectively. For example, all of the first connecting members **451**, **452** may be of the springing clasp type. Alternatively, the first 15 connecting members **451**, **452** may be in any combination of one or more types of connectors. An example of this case is illustrated in **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B**, where first connecting member **451** is of the lobster clasp type and first connecting member **452** is of the hook and eye clasp type. Similarly, in other embodiments of this third version of the invention, the first connecting members **451**, **452** may be placed in any order or orientation on the first joining member **420**. 20 For example, another embodiment of the third version of the invention may have the order of the first connecting members **451**, **452**, as illustrated in **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B**, changed so that first connecting member **451** is of the springing clasp type and first connecting member **452** is of the barrel clasp type. Further, it is not necessary that any second connecting member be in the same orientation as its cooperating first connecting member. For example, another embodiment of 25 this third version of the invention is obtained by changing the embodiment of **FIG. 5A** and **FIG.**

**5B** so that the first connecting member **451** cooperating with second connecting member **461** is located in the position occupied by first connecting member **452** in **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B**, and the first connecting member **452** cooperating with second connecting member **462** is located in the position occupied by first connecting member **451** in **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B**. This  
5 positioning would provide for an overlapping-type orientation, as opposed to a concentric circles-type orientation, of the decorative lengths **480**, **481** when worn by the wearer.

It is also to be noted that there may be as many first connecting members and second connecting members present as is reasonably practical and desired by the wearer. For example,  
10 the embodiment of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B** has two first connecting members **451**, **452**, but other embodiments of the invention may have three, four, five or more first connecting members. The preferred number of first connecting members, type of means of connecting each first connecting member to its respective decorative length, and means of arrangement of the first connecting members on the first joining member is dependent upon the  
15 individual tastes of the wearer with respect to types and orientation of the decorative lengths to be worn by the wearer.

In addition, as illustrated in **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B**, other embodiments of this third version of the invention may have one or more lengths of decorative material **482** permanently  
20 attached to the first joining member **420** and the second joining member **425**. In these embodiments, one end **493** of each permanently attached length of decorative material **482** is permanently attached to the first joining member **420** and the other end **498** of such decorative length **482** is permanently attached to the second joining member **425**. In other embodiments of this third version of the invention, the end **493** may be attached to any exposed surface of the  
25 first joining member **420** and the other end **498** may be attached to any exposed surface of the

second joining member **425**. The means of attachment may be any means used in the construction of jewelry and ornaments currently known in the art (which are so well known that they do not require additional description here) or discovered hereafter in the art. For example, such means may include soldering, welding, bronzing and use of glues, adhesives, cements, epoxies, screws, clips, pins, rivets and other fastening means now known or hereafter developed in the art. The preferred means of attachment is dependent upon the nature of the construction of the length of decorative material **482**, which is dependent upon the individual taste of the wearer. It is to be noted that permanently attached decorative lengths may also be used in conjunction with the first and second versions of this invention in the same general manner as described above.

In other embodiments of this third version of the invention, the first joining member **420** and the second joining member **425** may each also have one or more magnetic connecting portions similar to the first connecting portions **51, 151, 152, 251** and second connecting members **61, 161, 162, 261**, as illustrated and described above in conjunction with the first and second versions of the invention.

A fourth version of the invention is illustrated in **FIG. 6A** (which is a plan view from below the inner surface **521, 526** of the appliance **515**), **FIG. 6B** (which is a sectional perspective view of the embodiment of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 6A**, with the section break taken along the line **6B-6B** of **FIG. 6A**, and also showing the end **592** and other end **597** of a removable decorative length **581** slideably inserted into the first connecting portion **552** and second connecting portion **562**, respectively, and such view also having the fastening tab **571** removably inserted into the fastening cavity **572**), and **FIG. 6C** (which is a plan view from above the outer surface **522, 527** of the appliance **515**, having and showing the fastening tab

**571a** and the fastening cavity **572a** each being of a size smaller than the fastening tab **571** and the fastening cavity **572** of **FIG. 6A** and **FIG. 6B**). The embodiment of the fourth version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 6A** through **FIG. 6C** includes a first joining member **520**, which generally has a first inner surface **521** facing the wearer, a first outer surface **522** approximately  
 5 opposite of the first inner surface **521**, a first lateral fastening surface **523**, and a first lateral exterior surface **524**. It also includes a second joining member **525**, which generally has a second inner surface **526** facing the wearer, a second outer surface **527** approximately opposite of the second inner surface **526**, a second lateral fastening surface **528**, and a second lateral exterior surface **529**.

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In the embodiment of this fourth version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 6A** and **FIG. 6B**, the first joining member **520** is removably connected to the second joining member **525** by using magnetic fastening means comprised of a fastening tab **571** protruding from the first lateral fastening surface **523** of the first joining member **520** and a fastening cavity **572** located  
 15 in the second lateral fastening surface **528** of the second joining member **525**. The fastening tab **571** and the fastening cavity **572** are adapted to be of a shape, size and configuration so that all or a portion of the fastening tab **571** can be slideably inserted into and removed from the fastening cavity **572**. All or a portion of the fastening tab **571** and all or a portion of the fastening cavity **572** have magnetic properties, so that the first joining member **520** and second  
 20 joining member **525** are removably held together by magnetic force while the fastening tab **571** is inserted into the fastening cavity **572**. Preferably, all of the fastening tab **571** is inserted into the fastening cavity **572** when the first joining member **520** is removably connected to the second joining member **525**. In addition, as illustrated in **FIG. 6A** and **FIG. 6B**, the second inner surface **526** of the second joining portion **525** may have a slot portion **573**, which is an  
 25 opening in or portion cut away from the remainder of the second inner surface **526**, and the

fastening tab **571** may have a lip **574** protruding therefrom in the area of the slot portion **573** (when the fastening tab **571** is fully inserted into the fastening cavity **572**) to assist in the removal of the fastening tab **571** from the fastening cavity **572**. For example, by placing his or her thumb on the lip **574** and exerting force on the lip **574** in a lateral direction along the first inner surface **521** opposite from the direction of the fastening cavity **572**, the wearer can obtain additional leverage in slideably removing the fastening tab **571** from the fastening cavity **572**.

The fastening tab **571** and the fastening cavity **572** may extend almost the entire width of the first lateral fastening surface **523** and second lateral fastening surface **528**, respectively, as illustrated in **FIG. 6A**. Alternatively, the fastening tab **571a** and the fastening cavity **572a** may extend substantially less than the entire width of the first lateral fastening surface **523** or second lateral fastening surface **528**, respectively, as illustrated in **FIG. 6C**. For example, to make more room available for the first connecting portions **551**, **552** and second connecting portions **561**, **562**, as illustrated in **FIG. 6C**, the fastening tab **571a** and the fastening cavity **572a** may extend only a limited distance along the width of the first lateral fastening surface **523** or second lateral fastening surface **528** in a manner so that the boundaries of the fastening cavity **572a** do not intersect any boundary of the first connecting portions **551**, **552** and second connecting portions **561**, **562**, when viewed from above the first inner surface **521** and second inner surface **526**. The fastening cavity **572** is generally an indentation in the second joining member **525** (or if utilized, the second joining portion **545**), which may be constructed in any manner currently known or hereafter developed in the art. Preferably, the cavity is formed during construction of the second joining member **525** or the second joining portion **545**, as the case may be, using any means described in greater detail above.

It is to be noted that in this fourth version of the invention the first joining member **520**



and the second joining member **525** may be of almost any size, shape, structure and configuration reasonably desired by the wearer, provided that the first joining member **520** and the second joining member **525** are removably connected together using a fastening tab and fastening cavity in the manner described above. For example, the first joining member **520** and  
5 the second joining member **525** may have the same general configuration as the first joining member **420** and the second joining member **425**, as illustrated and described above in conjunction with **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B** and the third version of the invention.

In the fourth version of the invention, the first joining member **520** and the second  
10 joining member **525** may be constructed of almost any material suitable for construction of the first joining member **420** and second joining member **425**, respectively, as illustrated and described above in conjunction with **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B** and the third version of the invention, provided that there are sufficient materials having magnetic properties to accomplish the fastening tab and fastening cavity means described above. Similarly, the first joining  
15 member **520** and the second joining member **525** may be hollow or homogeneous in their structure. In addition, the first joining member **520** and the second joining member **525** may be constructed in one or more parts. For example, the first joining member **520** may have a first decorative portion **530** and a first joining portion **540** and the second joining member **525** may have a second decorative portion **535** and a second joining portion **545**, which have features  
20 similar to, and may be attached together in a manner similar to, those of the first joining member **420** and the second joining member **425**, respectively, as illustrated and described above in conjunction with **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B** and the third version of this invention, and similar to those of the first joining member **320** and the second joining member **325**, respectively, as illustrated and described above in conjunction with **FIG. 4A** through **FIG. 4C** and the second  
25 version of this invention. The first joining member **520** and the second joining member **525** may

be constructed in the same general manner as the first joining member **320** and the second joining member **325**, as illustrated and described above in conjunction with the second version of this invention. The preferred materials and means of construction of the first joining member **520** and the second joining member **525** are dependent upon the individual tastes of the wearer.

5 More preferred, the first joining portion **540** and the second joining portion **545** are constructed of rigid or semi-rigid materials, such as a metallic or plastic-type material.

The fastening tab **571**, **571a** may be constructed of any material and using any means suitable for its intended purpose, which are generally the same materials and means that are  
10 suitable for construction of the first joining member **520**, or if a first joining portion **540** is used, materials and means that are suitable for construction of the first joining portion **540**. Preferably, the fastening tab **571**, **571a** is constructed of the same material as the first joining member **520** or the first joining portion **540**, as the case may be, so that the fastening tab **571**, **571a** can constructed as a part of the first joining member **520** or the first joining portion **540**, as  
15 the case may be. Alternatively, the fastening tab **571**, **571a** can be constructed of the same or a different material as the first joining member **520** or the first joining portion **540**, as the case may be, and be attached to the first joining member **520** or the first joining portion **540**, as the case may be. Any means currently known or hereafter discovered in the art are generally suitable as the means of such attachment. For example, such means may include soldering,  
20 welding, bronzing and use of glues, adhesives, cements, epoxies, screws, clips, pins, rivets and other fastening means now known or hereafter developed in the art.

The magnetic properties for the fastening tab **571**, **571a** may be provided in any manner currently known or hereafter developed in the art. For example, the fastening tab **571**, **571a** may  
25 be constructed in two parts. In such case, the body of the fastening tab **571**, **571a** may be

constructed of almost any material known or hereafter discovered in the art, such material not having magnetic properties, and a thin strip of metallic or other material having magnetic properties may be attached to, or be slightly recessed into, a surface of the fastening tab **571**, **571a**. The means of such attachment may be any of those currently known (which are too well known to require additional description here) or hereafter developed in the art in the future. The preferred means of attaching such strip is a glue or other adhesive. Alternatively, and preferably, the fastening tab **571**, **571a** is constructed of a material having magnetic properties. Similarly, the magnetic properties for the fastening cavity **572**, **572a** may be provided in any manner currently known (which are so well known that they do not require additional description here) or hereafter developed in the art. For example, the second joining member **525** may be constructed in at least two parts. In such case, the second joining member **525** or second joining portion **545**, as the case may be, may be constructed of almost any material known or hereafter discovered in the art, such material not having magnetic properties, and a thin strip of metallic or other material having magnetic properties may be attached to, or be slightly recessed into, a surface of the portion of the second joining member **525** adjacent to the fastening cavity **572**, **572a**. The means of such attachment may be any of those currently known (which are so well known that they do not require additional description here) or hereafter developed in the art. The preferred means of attaching such strip is a glue or other adhesive. Alternatively, and preferably, the second joining member **525** or at least the portion of the second joining member **525** immediately adjacent to the fastening cavity **572**, **572a** is constructed of a material having magnetic properties. In all embodiments of this fourth version of the invention, the portions of the fastening tab **571**, **571a** having magnetic properties and the portions of the second joining member **525** having magnetic properties must together have a magnetic field strength and polarity sufficient to hold the first lateral fastening surface **523** of the first joining member **520** to the second lateral fastening surface **528** of the second joining member **525** during anticipated

use, but also allow for the removal of the first joining member **520** from the second joining member **525** with a reasonable amount of force when the wearer wants to remove the appliance **515**.

5           In the embodiment of the fourth version of the invention illustrated in **FIG. 6A** through **FIG. 6C**, each first joining member **520** has two or more first connecting portions **551, 552**. Each second joining member **525** also has two or more second connecting portions **561, 562**. When removably connected together, the first joining member **520** and the second joining member **525** allow two or more lengths of decorative material **580, 581** to be worn together  
10 simultaneously. Generally, each of the decorative lengths **580, 581** has two ends, with ends **591, 592** being removably connected to first connecting portions **551, 552**, respectively, and the other ends **596, 597** being removably connected to second connecting portions **561, 562**, respectively. As illustrated in **FIG. 6C**, this embodiment of the fourth version of the invention has two first connecting portions **551, 552** and two second connecting portions **561, 562**, but  
15 there may be more or fewer first connecting portions and second connecting portions in other embodiments of this fourth version of the invention. Each first connecting portion **551, 552** and each two second connecting portion **561, 562** may generally have the same features and limitations as the first connecting portions **51, 151, 152, 251, 351, 352** and second connecting portions **61, 161, 162, 261, 361, 362**, as illustrated and discussed above in conjunction with **FIG.**  
20 **1A, FIG. 1B, FIG. 2A** through **FIG. 2C, FIG. 3A** through **FIG. 3C, FIG. 4A** through **FIG. 4C**, and the first and second versions of this invention. Generally, each of the decorative lengths **580, 581** and their ends **591, 592** and other ends **596, 597**, respectively, have the same features and limitations as decorative lengths **80, 180, 181, 280** and their ends **91, 191, 192, 291**,  
respectively, and other end **96, 196, 197, 296**, respectively, as illustrated and discussed above in  
25 conjunction with **FIG. 1A, FIG. 1B, FIG. 2A** through **FIG. 2C, FIG. 3A** through **FIG. 3C**, and

the first version of this invention, so that each of the decorative lengths **580** and **581** can each be separately worn as an independent ornament.

It is to be noted that in this fourth version of the invention first joining member **520** may  
5 have one or more first connecting members that have the same features and limitations as first  
connecting members **451**, **452**, and the second joining member **525** may have one or more  
second connecting members that have the same features and limitations as second connecting  
members **461**, **462**, as illustrated and discussed above in conjunction with **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B**,  
and the third version of this invention. As illustrated and discussed above in conjunction with  
10 **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B**, and the third version of this invention, the first connecting members and  
the second connecting members in embodiments of the fourth version may all have the same  
type of means to connect to the ends of the decorative lengths removably connected to the first  
joining member and second joining member, respectively, or they may be of different types,  
orientations and configurations. For example, all of such first connecting members may be of  
15 the springing clasp type, or such first connecting members may be of the lobster clasp and hook  
and eye clasp types. It is also to be noted that there may be as many first connecting portions  
**551**, **552**, first connecting members, second connecting portions **561**, **562**, and second  
connecting members present as is reasonably practical and desired by the wearer. The preferred  
number of first connecting portions, first connecting members, second connecting portions, and  
20 second connecting members, as well as type of means of connecting each the same to its  
respective decorative length, and means of arrangement of the same on the first joining member  
**520** or second joining member **525**, as the case may be, is dependent upon the individual tastes  
of the wearer with respect to types and orientation of the decorative lengths to be worn by the  
wearer. The preferred means of attaching any first connecting members to the first joining  
25 member **520** and of attaching any second connecting members to the second joining member

**525** is the same as described above for first connecting members **451**, **452** and second connecting members **461**, **462**, respectively, as illustrated and discussed above in conjunction with **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B**, and the third version of this invention.

5           Finally, other embodiments of this fourth version of the invention may have one or more lengths of decorative material permanently attached to the first joining member **520** and the second joining member **525**. In these embodiments, one end of each permanently attached length of decorative material is permanently attached to the first joining member **520** and the other end of such decorative length is permanently attached to the second joining member **525** in  
10 the same manner as illustrated and described above in conjunction with **FIG. 5A** and **FIG. 5B**, and the third version of this invention.

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